

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 00143 221455Z

44

ACTION H-03

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FM USINT ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0041

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0143

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, AG, OREP

SUBJ: CODEL FANNIN AND QUESTION OF ALGERIAN
LNG POLICY

REF: ALGIERS 0042

1. DURING VISIT TO ALGIERS JANUARY 20-22 OF SENATORS FANNIN, HANSEN AND BARTLETT QUESTION OF RELIABILITY OF SUPPLY OF ALGERIAN LNG WAS RAISED WITH SEVERAL ALGERIAN OFFICIALS. MOST FORTHRIGHT ANSWER CAME FROM SONATRACH VICE PRESIDENT AIT-LAOUSSINE WHO REPEATED COMMENT MADE IN U.S. BY MINISTER INDUSTRY ABDESSELAM (NOW ABSENT FROM ALGIERS) TO EFFECT THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES (OIL BOYCOTT) ALGERIA WOULD BE ABLE TO SHIP LNG TO U.S., EVEN IF TECHNICAL PROBLMES WERE RESOLVED. SENATORS APPRECIATED AIT-LAOUSSINE'S CANDOR.

2. OTHER ALGERIANS (HAMDANI AND CHANDERLI) EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE TO BOTH COUNTRIES OF LONG TERM LNG RELATIONSHIP. DURING SENATOR'S SESSION WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE QUESTION OF LNG BOYCOTT WAS NOT RAISED, BUT WE NOTED THAT WHEN BOUMEDIENE SPOKE OF BOYCOTT SITUATION IN GNERAL HE USED PAST TENSE.

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3. ALTHOUGH ALL THREE SENATORS WERE CONCERNED
ABOUT RELIABILITY OF LNG SUPPLIES, THEY DID NOT, AS
DID SENATOR JOHNSTON (REFTEL), APPEAR TO BELIEVE
THAT FAILURE OF ALGERIA TO GIVE IRON CLAD GUARANTEE ON LNG
SHIPMENTS SHOULD CAUSE USG TO RECONSIDER
ADDITIONAL LONG TERM GAS CONTRACTS WITH ALGERIA.
EAGLETON

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